

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GEORGE 01109 271112Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00
XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 EPG-02 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-04
CEA-01 /089 W

-----280305Z 078302 /63

R 271032Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4712
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 1109

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID, GY, TD
SUBJECT: REPORT OF TRINIDAD ASSISTANCE TO GUYANA

REF: GEORGETOWN 1108

SUMMARY: THE GOVERNMENT TO TRINIDAD, ACCORDING TO
FONMIN WILLS, IS CONSIDERING EXTENDING US\$120 MILLION
IN CREDITS TO GUYANA AT COMMERCIAL BANK INTEREST
RATES. WE REAMIN SKEPTICAL OF THE REPORT. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING OUR MAY 25 MEETING WILLS SAID THAT THE
GROUP WHICH HAD GONE TO TRINIDAD TO DISCUSS
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE HAD BEEN WELL-RECEIVED. THE
TRINIDADIAN HAD NOT BEEN ARROGANT AND HAD INDICATED
THEY WANTED TO HELP GUYANA. WILLS COMMENTED THAT HE
THOUGHT PERHAPS THE USG MIGHT HAVE HAD SOMETHING TO
DO WITH ENCOURAGING THE TRINIDADIAN TO BE COURTEOUS
AND FORTHCOMING TO GUYANA.

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2. THE GOVERNMENT OF TRINIDAD, ACCORDING TO WILLS,
HAD AGREED TO CONSIDER A TOTAL CREDIT PACKAGE OF
US\$120 MILLION AT INTEREST RATES EQUIVALENT TO THAT
WHICH COULD BE OBTAINED FROM NEW YORK BANKS. OF
THAT TOTAL, \$45 MILLION WOULD BE GIVEN TO GUYANA IN
CASH. THE LATTER WAS THE AMOUNT GUYANA HAD RECENTLY
TRANSFERRED TO THE GOT AS DEBT PAYMENTS.

3. IN RETURN, GUYANA HAD AGREED TO INCREASE TRADE WITH TRINIDAD. WHEN GUYANA STARTS IMPORTING AUTOMOBILES AGAIN, IT WOULD GIVE PRIORITY TO IMPORTS FROM TRINIDAD. TRINIDAD'S FISHING FLEET WOULD HAVE SPECIAL RIGHTS IN GUYANESE WATERS. THE GUYANESE HAD AGREED TO GIVE CERTAIN THIRD COUNTRY RIGHTS THAT GUYANA AIRWAYS ENJOYED TO BWIA. WILLS WAS VAGUE ABOUT JUST WHAT THESE RIGHTS WERE, AND SAID SOME QUESTION REMAINED ABOUT THE LEGALITY OF THE BWIA ARRANGEMENT. THE ASSISTANCE PACKAGE WOULD BE REFERRED TO THE TRINIDADIAN CABINET FOR DECISION.

4. THERE WOULD BE A MEETING OF CARICOM LEADERS ON JUNE 17 IN TRINIDAD. WILLS EXPECTED THAT PRIME MINISTER ERIC WILLIAMS WOULD ANNOUNCE ON JUNE 17 THE ASSISTANCE TRINIDAD WOULD PROVIDE TO GUYANA AND OTHER CARICOM COUNTRIES WAS CONSIDERING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. HIS CONCERN WAS THAT WILLIAMS WOULD TRY TO MAKE A SHOW OUT OF HOW BURNHAM HAD BEGGED FOR MONEY. BURNHAM WOULD REFUSE TO TAKE ASSISTANCE UNDER THOSE CONDITIONS. WILLS HOPED VERY MUCH THAT THE MATTER WOULD BE HANDLED IN A TASTEFUL FASHION.

5. COMMENT: I WAS SURPRISED AT THE MAGNITUDE OF ASSISTANCE WILLS CLAIMED THAT THE TRINIDADIAN NEGOTIATORS WOULD RECOMMEND TO THE GOTT CABINET AND QUESTIONED HIM CONCERNING THE AMOUNT AND WHETHER HE REALLY MEANT US DOLLARS. HE INSISTED THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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HE DID. THE PERSONAL RIVALRY EXISTING BETWEEN WILLIAMS AND BURNHAM COUPLED WITH BURNHAM'S SUPER-EGO INDICATE WE SHOULD TREAT THE REPORT AND THE AMOUNTS INVOLVED WITH SKEPTICISM. BLACKEN

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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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